प्रस्तावों को, अनुसूचित जाति/अनुसूचित जनजाति की सूची के संशोधन के लिए सचिव (कल्याण) की अध्यक्षता में गठित सलाहकार समिति को उनकी सिफारिश हेतु भेजा गया है । समिति की सिफारिश प्राप्त होने पर, संविधान के अनुच्छेद 342 के अंतर्गत संकलित उपबंधों के अनुसार आगामी आवश्यक कार्यवाही की जाएगी ।

Vaidyanathan Committee on Pricing

*366. SHRI SARADA MOHANTY :
SHRI SOM PAL :

Will the Minister of WATER RESOURCES be pleased to state :

(a) whether theVaidyanathan Committee on Pricing of Irrigation has submitted its report;

(b) if so, what are the major recommendations thereof ;

(c) what follow up action is being contemplated thereon ;

(d) whether the Committee has expressed concern over the uncovered cost of irrigation, which is increasing at an unsustainable rapid rate;

(e) whether Government have attempted to identify the various components of this increasing unsustainable cost of irrigation ;

(f) if so, what are the findings thereof ;

(g) if not, the reasons therefor;

(h) whether it is a fact that the number of officials in irrigation administration, especially in managing the canal system, has increased manifold since independence and accounts for a major increase in the cost of irrigation ; and

(i) whether Government would consider economising on this aspect and reduce overhead costs rather than making the farmers to pay for maintaining this unwanted burden of irrigation administration ?

THE MINISTER OF WATER RESOURCES AND PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRI VIDYACHARAN SHUKLA) : (a) to (i) The Committee on Pricing of Irrigation Water set up by the Planning Commission in October, 1991 under the Chairmanship of Dr. A. Vaidyanathan submitted its report in September, 1992.

The suggestions of the Committee include : treating of water rates as users' charge ; the objective of water charges is ultimately to recover cost; linking revision of water rates to the improvement of the quality of service; revision and imple mentation of water rates in phases; con ("olidation of the system of Farmer group management; upgrading the system to higher level efficiency in water use and productivity; setting up experts group at the State level for working out norms for operation and maintenance and procedure for periodic review ; setting up of autonomous boards at the State level to review policy regarding cost of water, revising water rates and introducing a minimum financial return criteria.

The copies of the Committee's report have been sent to all States and Union Territories for their comments. The Planning Commission has meanwhile set up a Group of officials to go into the report of the Committee. Irrigation being a state subject decision on water rates '.an be taken only in consultation with the State Governments and Union Territories.

The Committee has expressed its concern over the increasing uncovered cost of irrigation. As per the Committee Report, the various components of the unre-covered cost on account of irrigation and multi-purpose projects are as under ;

(Rs. crores)

Items	1977-78	1986-87
Gross Revenue .	969	1667
Working Expenses .	1272	4927
Interest on capital average borrowing of Cost .	2113	10589
Depreciation @ 1 % .	385	1406
Unrecovered costs	3770	16922
	2801	15255

With the increase in irrigation potential, there has been an increase in number of officials in irrigation administration. The staff component has risen from 34 per cent in 1974-75 to 43 per cent in 1986-87 .of the working expenses on irrigation and multi-purpose projects. The Vaidyanathan Committee has considered various aspects of economising and reducing overhead costs and have *inter alia* recommended hat staff strength needs to be frozen and edeployed in new commands and also to transfer functions of O&M to users' gtoups below the point of group delivery.

Damage to Foodgrains Due to Hailstorm

*367. SHRI SATISH PRADHAN : Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state :

(a) what is the extent of damage caused to the orange and foodgrain g rowers in Vidarbha region due to hailstorm ;

(b) whether Government propose to offer any relief to the affected farmers; and . -

(c) whether Government would imple-ment the crop insurance scheme to such areas, which are prone to unseasonal natural calamities ?

THE MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI BALRAM JAKHAR) : (a) As per information received from Govern' ment of Maharashtra an area of 386 hectares of Oranges were damaged to the extent of more than 50% in Vidharbha region of the State due to hailstorm in February, 1994. No damage has been reported to the Orange crop in the region due to hailstorm in April, 1994, Information on damage to foodgrains is awaited from State Government.

(b) Information is being collected.

(c) Area based and credit linked Comprehensive Crop Insurance Scheme, for wheat, paddy, millets, pulses and oil seeds to cover damage caused by Natural calamities in notified areas, is already in operation in the State of Maharashtra.

Gur and Khandsari Industry

*368. SHRI KRISHAN LAL SHARMA: Will the Minister of FOOD be pleased to state :

(a) whether it is a fact that sugar industry has an adverse effect on the growth of gur and khandsari industry of the country ;

(b) whether it is also a fact that gur and khandsari are cost effective and have good potential for export; and

(c) if so, the details of the steps Government propose to take to encourage these two rural-based industries 7

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FOOD (SHRI KALP NATH RAI) : (a) No, Sir.

(b) No, Sir. In international market mostly the sugar of the refined quality and white plantation sugar conforming to high international specifications is traded. There is low acceptability of sugar produced through open pan process (khandsari). There is also limited scope of export of gur.

(c) Does not arise. However, both khandsari and gur sector have been kept outside the purview of the partial control mechanism which is applicable for the sugar industry and are also exempt from Excise duty.

Subsidy on Food

*369. SHRI BHUPINDER SINGH MANN: Will the Minister of FOOD be pleased to state:

(a) what amount of subsidy is being given on food, indicate details of the last three years;

(b) what part of this subsidv goes to pay wages; and

(c) what is the difference between the. prices paid to the fanners and prices received from the beneficiaries of these subsidies for five important items ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FOOD (SHRI KALP NATH RAI): (a) The amount of food subsidv given/released to Food Corporation of India during the last three years is as follows:

Year	(Rs. in crores)
1991-92 .	2850
1992-93 .	2785
1993-94 .	5537

(b) The amount of wages paid to the employees/labourers of the Corporation for undertaking various operations during the last three years was as follows:

Year	Amount (Rs. in crores)
1991-92 .	463.29
1992-93	686.07
1993-94 (RE) .	556.21

(c) Wheat and paddy and coarse grains are currently procured from farmers by the Food Corporation of India in collaboration with the State Governments and their procuring agencies for the Central Pool at the following minimum support prices:

(Rs. per quintal)

	1993-94	1994-95
Wheat	. 330 (includes central bonus of Rs. 25/-per quintal)	350
Paddy		
Common	310	
Fine	330	
Superfine	350	
Coarse grains		
(Jowar, ragi)	260	
Maize	265	
Barley	260	275

While retail issue prices of foodgraint sold to consumers through Public Distribution System are the termined by State